

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 INR-05 NSC-05 NSCE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 SP-02 L-01 TRSE-00 IO-06
OMB-01 EB-04 USIA-01 PA-01 PM-03 /060 W
-----172039Z 112975 /72-65

R 171037Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6758
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4404

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PING, IS
SUBJECT: COVERSATION WITH EZER WEIZMAN

1. I HAD LONG, PRIVATE TALK JUNE 16 WITH GENERAL (RETIRED)
EZER WEIZMAN, WHO WILL BECOME MINISTER OF DEFENSE NEXT
WEEK IN BEGIN GOVERNMENT. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF
INTERESTING TIDBITS WORTH REPORTING.

2. WEIZMAN IS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE LIKUD/DMC NEGOTIATIONS
BROKE DOWN, BUT BELIEVES THE DMC "OR AT LEAST PART OF
IT" MAY STILL GOING THE GOVERNMENT "SOMETIME AFTER BEGIN
GOES TO WASHINGTON" BUT "NOT BEFORE." HE THINKS THAT
IS MORE LIKELY IF BEGIN'S TRIP IS SEEN AS RELATIVELY
SUCCESSFUL; I.E., IF IT DOES NOT PRODUCE THE APPEARANCE
OF A RAPID WORSENING IN US/ISRAELI RELATIONS. HE MOSTLY
BLAMES BEGIN, I THINK, FOR THE STALEMATE, BUT ALSO BLAMES
SOME OF THE DMC NEGOTIATORS FOR THEIR "HOLIER THAN THOU"
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APPROACH TO BEGIN IN THE MEETINGS. HE ALSO SAID "VERY
CONFIDENTIALLY" THAT A REPORT BEGIN RECEIVED FROM
"SOMEONE IN WASHINGTON" STRESSING HOW MUCH THE U.S.
WANTED TO SEE THE DMC IN THE COALITION "GOT BEGIN'S
BACK UP" AND HARDENED HIS NEGOTIATING POSITION.

3. WEIZMAN IS WELL AWARE THAT ARABS ARE CHARACTERIZING

BEGIN GOVERNMENT AS "WAR CABINET." HE HAS REFUSED PROPOSAL TO MAKE GENERAL ARIK SHARON IDF CHIEF OF STAFF PARTLY FOR THIS REASON. HE HAS HIGH REGARD FOR SHARON'S GENERALSHIP, BUT REALIZED THAT A WEIZMAN/SHARON TEAM IN THE DEFENSE MINISTRY WOULD "SCARE THE ARABS AND CONVINCE THEM WAR IS INEVITABLE." (AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, SHARON WILL, HOWEVER, ALSO SIT IN SMALL CABINET COMMITTEE DEALING WITH DEFENSE MATTERS.)

4. WEIZMAN INSISTS THAT BEGIN IS DETERMINED TO FIND SOME WAY TO NEGOTIATE, "ON THE BASIS OF OUR INTERPRETATION OF 242." (THE "OUR" WAS UNDERSCORED.) HE SEES LITTLE CHANCE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT, HOWEVER, AND PUTS HIS OWN HOPES ON NEGOTIATING NEW PARTIAL AGREEMENTS WITH EGYPT AND SYRIA. WHILE NOT DENYING THE OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES, HE SAYS "THEY CAN DO IT, AND KEEP THE PLO UNDER CONTROL, IF THE SAUDIS INSIST. THE SAUDIS ARE THE KEY."
LEWIS

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NNN

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